



County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs

Josh Candelaria
Director

April 20, 2015

The Honorable Beth Jackson
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 229 – As amended March 23, 2015 – **SUPPORT**
Set for Hearing on April 21, 2015

Dear Senator Jackson:

The County of San Bernardino is pleased to support SB 229, legislation that would increase the number of judgeships in the Inland Empire.

California's state court system, the largest in the nation, serves 38 million people. The state's fastest growing counties, including San Bernardino County, are facing a critical shortage of judges to hear the cases of our most vulnerable citizens. In 2007, the Legislature authorized 50 new trial court judges. However, the positions remain unfunded and unfilled. San Bernardino County Superior Court is one of the most underfunded, under judged and staffed courts in the state, which handles some of the highest caseloads statewide. On December 13, 2012, the California Judicial Council voted to approve the 2012 Judicial Needs Assessment which determined the County of San Bernardino needed 156 judges to meet the community's needs. Unfortunately, to date, only 67 of those judges are funded.

The budget reductions to the Court over the years have resulted in drastic operational and service cuts throughout the County. Over the last year, courts have closed in four San Bernardino County communities: Chino, Twin Peaks, Big Bear, and Needles. However, in spite of these closures, San Bernardino County Court is still projecting a significant shortfall. The Judicial Council is attempting to address the issue by seeking funding for 10 of the 50 authorized judgeships this year, with the hope of getting additional judges to provide relief to the state's most overburdened courts. Based on a recent judicial needs assessment conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts, if the 10 additional judges were funded, the San Bernardino County Superior Court would receive three.

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For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino is pleased to support SB 229 and thanks you for your leadership on this important issue. If you have any questions, please contact Josh Candelaria, Director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821 or jcandelaria@sbcounty.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Ramos', with a stylized, flowing script.

JAMES RAMOS
Board of Supervisors Chairman
Third District Supervisor
County of San Bernardino

c: The Honorable Richard Roth
Members and Consultants, Senate Judiciary Committee
County of San Bernardino Delegation